

February 23, 2023

In support of SB 1095.

Dear Chairs Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, and members of the housing committee:

My name is Samantha DaSilva I am a resident of West Haven, Connecticut and an ally of the Connecticut Justice Alliance. I am testifying in support of S.B. 1095: An Act Concerning the Use of School Resource Officers In Connecticut Schools.

All students deserve to feel safe, secure and supported in their places of learning. Yet too often our schools rely on policing to keep children in line, rather than funding professionals trained to deliver students necessary developmental and behavioral health resources.

According to research by [Connecticut Voices for Children](#), there's no evidence School Resource Officers (SROs) make students or staff safer, but schools with SROs have more arrests and more expulsions than their peer institutions without SROs.

The overpopulation of school resource officers, primarily in urban schools, has impacted children of color more than anyone.

- The [percentage](#) of Black students arrested was over 17 times as high in schools with SROs, and the percentage of Latino/a/x students arrested was over ten times as high in schools with SROs.
- [Students](#) in schools with SROs were over three times more likely to be arrested than students in schools without SROs. For Black and Latino/a/x students, the risk of arrest was over five times higher in schools with SROs than in schools without SROs.
- [Students](#) in schools with SROs were 1.58 times as likely to be expelled as those without an SRO. The increased risk of expulsion was even greater for Black and Latino/a/x children.
- Research shows that the presence of SROs in schools increases the likelihood of discipline and arrest for Black and Latinx students, without providing measurably better educational or safety outcomes.

I strongly support S.B. 1095. I hope the Committee and Connecticut lawmakers will vote in favor of this bill. Together, we can build an educational system that is centered on the social-emotional well-being of students through care, resources, learning, and restoration.

Thank you for your time,

Samantha DaSilva